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Northern Messenger

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Allen Kilam 3rd 221-5-6 #10

Alban, the First Martyr in Britain

(H. D., in 'Little Folks.')

You have all heard, I dare say, of the holy Stephen, who was the first to suffer death for the name of Jesus, and who is, therefore, called the first Christian martyr. And you know how he was pelted to death with large stones outside the city of Jerusalem, and how, with his last breath, he prayed that his persecutors might be forgiven.

That was in the far-off land of the Jews, which was sometimes called the land of Canaan, and sometimes Palestine, and the Holy Land.

But the good Christians 'knew' the truth of what they believed, and willingly and cheerfully suffered for the sake of their Lord and Master; therefore, after Stephen many more were put to death for His name, who had died for them.

And so for centuries, one after another, the Roman emperors, who were at that time masters of the world, and who hated the name of Jesus, inflicted on His humble followers the most cruel tortures they could think of; and for a long time persecution raged wherever Christianity was professed; and that was in many places.

It soon reached to our own island. For even in those far-back ages there were in Britain many good Christians, men and women, who, rather than deny that Name, which to them was sweeter than honey, chose to suffer persecution and death.

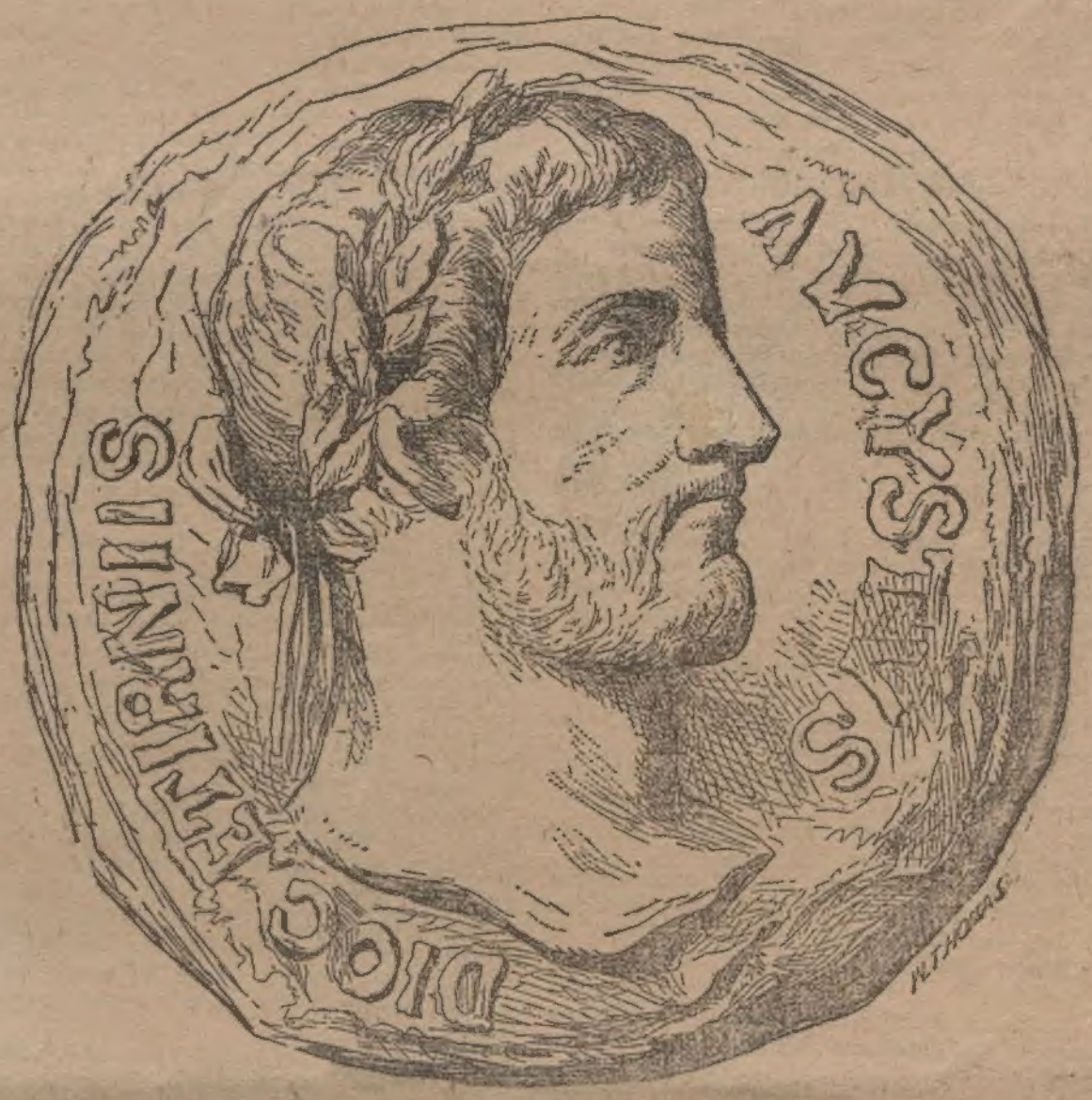
They 'chose' to suffer, I say; for offers of pardon were generally made to them, on condition that they would turn from the living and true God, and worship the many gods of heathenish Rome. But, having once known and felt that He was the only God and their Father in heaven, they could not forsake Him; and so, though He allowed many to be put to death, He did not forsake them, but gave them such peace and joy in all their sufferings, that their persecutors might well have envied them.

Now, as you know who was the first Christian martyr in the land of the Jews, I think you would like to know also who was the first in our own land; and so I am going to tell you about him.

He was a young man, named Alban, who was of Roman descent, but was born in the ancient town of Verulam, which, if you will turn to your atlas, you will find marked under the name of St. Albans, in the county of Hertford.

In his childhood he had been taught to worship the false gods of his forefathers, and had, no doubt, often longed to visit the great city where the emperor lived, and to know more about its gods, and its temples, and its worship.

At length, when a youth, he went to Rome, in company with a good Christian man named Amphibalus; and while there he had the opportunity every day of witnessing his holy life, and of comparing it with the careless wicked lives of those who believed in Mars, and Jupiter, and Saturn, and Venus, and many other false gods and goddesses, who could not help those who trusted in them to do what was right.



MEDAL OF THE ROMAN EMPEROR DIOCLETIAN.

And so Alban began to think that the Christian religion must be better than that which he had been taught, and he desired to know more about it. Amphibalus readily taught him, and in time he became a Christian, bravely taking up the cross which all the followers of Jesus Christ had then to carry; for they were not allowed to remain peacefully in their own quiet homes, but were driven to take refuge in holes underground, or in caves in the rocks, and to suffer hunger and thirst.

For seven years Alban, it is said, had to serve abroad in the armies of the Roman emperor, Diocletian; but when he returned to his native land he did not forget the good man who had first led him to believe the glorious Gospel.

Amphibalus, I must tell you, was at that time an outlaw for his religion. To give him food or clothes, or to offer him shelter, was death. But Alban was no coward. He could not selfishly go back to his own home, and know that the good old man was a homeless wanderer, and, if not succoured, must soon die of hunger and cold. So, remembering that they were brethren, and resolved to share his fate, he invited Amphibalus to come and live with him.

No sooner did the Romans hear of it than they carried tidings to the governor, who sent messengers to seize Amphibalus. But Alban would not betray his guest. Clothing himself in the garments of Amphibalus, he delivered himself up in his stead. At once he was taken before the Roman governor, who was just then sacrificing to his gods. Ordering Alban to be dragged before them, he cried in angry tones, 'Because you have sheltered and concealed a sacrilegious and rebellious person, and prevented him from suffering the punishment due to him as a contemner of the law, you yourself shall undergo that punishment, if it be true that you are guilty of the same offences.'

But the young man was unmoved, and, when questioned by the governor as to his family, said, 'That it cannot concern you to know. But if you wish to be informed as to my religion, be it known unto you that I am a Christian, and bound by Christian duties.'

'I insist upon knowing your name,' said the offended judge. 'Tell it me immediately.'

'I am called Alban by my parents,' was the young man's reply; 'and I worship the living and true God, who created all things.'

The judge then told him that if he wished to live and be happy he must lose no time in offering sacrifices to the gods of the Romans.

But Alban firmly replied that he would not do so; that it could do no good to pray and offer sacrifices to idols that could neither hear nor help; and that those who wilfully turned from the true God must incur His wrath.

The Roman governor, seeing that his prisoner still remained firm, ordered him to be scourged, hoping that that painful punishment might shake his resolution. But Alban, following in the steps of his holy Master, bore it all meekly and patiently, and even joyfully, which enraged his persecutors the more;

and he was at once led out of the city to the top of a hill, where he was beheaded.

Not long afterwards, the good old Amphibalus himself was led, with nine others, to the place of death, where he suffered as bravely and patiently as his young friend and disciple had done.

When the terrible persecutions by the Roman emperors ceased, and the Christians enjoyed peace and liberty, a church, called St. Albans, was erected to the memory of Alban; and the old town of Verulam, where he had lived and died, was called by the same name, by which it is at present known.

Not a Candidate

The story is told of Senator Vance, of North Carolina, the champion story-teller of the State, who has a broad stripe of Calvinism down his back, though he is not a communicant of the Church, that, riding along in Buncomba county one day, he overtook a venerable darkey, with whom he thought he would have 'a little fun.'

'Uncle,' said the Governor, 'are you going to church?'

'No, sah; not exactly. I'm gwine back from church.'

'You're a Baptist, I reckon, ain't you?'

'No, sah; I ain't no Baptist. De most of de bredren and sistern about here has been under the water.'

'Methodist, then?'

'No, sah; I ain't no Mefodis' nudder.'

'Campbellite,'

'No, sah; I can't arrogate to myself de Camellite ways of thinkin'.'

'Well, what in the name of goodness are you, then?' rejoined the Governor, remembering the narrow range of choice in religions among North Carolina negroes.

'Well, de fac' is, sah, my old marster was a herald of the cross in de Presbyterian Church, and I was fetch' up in dat faith.'

'What! You don't mean it? Why, that is my church.'

The negro making no comment on this announcement, Governor Vance went at him again.

'And do you believe in all of the Presbyterian doctrine?'

'Yes, sah; dat I does.'

'Do you believe in the doctrine of predestination?'

'I dunno dat I recognize de name, sah.'

'Why, do you believe that if a man is elected to be saved, he will be saved, and if he is elected to be lost, he will be lost?'

'Oh, yes, boss; I believe dat. It's Gospel talk, dat is.'

'Well, now, take my case. Do you believe that I am elected to be saved?'

The old man struggled for a moment with his desire to be respectful and polite, and then shook his head dubiously.

'Come, now, answer my question,' pressed the Governor. 'What do you say?'

'Well, I'll tell you what 'tis, Mars Zeb. I've been libbin' in dis hyar world nigh on sixty years, an' I nebber yet hyard of any man bein' 'lected 'thout he was a candidate.'

—Selected.

Keeping Insulated

There are a thousand death-dealing currents of electricity playing around us as we live our lives out day by day. We must live among the forces of evil; we must be close to them, and rub up against them, and feel them touch us as they pass to and fro on their restless course. But we do not need to let them enter into our systems, or affect our nerve centers, or stimulate our wrong desires, or burn death into our hearts. We cannot dodge them, but we can be insulated from them. The insulation of God's presence in our lives, and his encircling care, is the only safeguard that will effectually keep these currents out of our lives. That insulation will not be forced on us; but we may have it, and keep it daily renewed, if we will seek it as eagerly as we would seek protection from physical death. The man who rises from his knees every morning after a season of loving reconsecration of himself and all his purposes to God and God's service, and who renews his prayer silently many times in the thick of the day's turmoil, has wrapped himself about with a force through which no evil can flow. The insulation of God's presence fails only when we cast it from us.—'Sunday-school Times.'

Work in Labrador.

WORD FROM HARRINGTON.

(Nurse Mayou, in 'Among the Deep Sea Fishers.)

Harrington Harbor,
Jan. 30, 1909.

Dear Mr. Editor,—Although I have not heard from you for some time, I feel sure that you will like to hear how we are getting on at Harrington. The doctor is the only one who has any hardships to endure. I sometimes feel ashamed to think how comfortably we are housed, while he on his trips, east, and west, is undergoing all kinds of privations and running into many dangers. He returned on Sunday from his first long trip of the season, having been away five weeks and having travelled with his dogs nearly three hundred miles. He came back looking as if he had been leading a strenuous life, and he had lost seven pounds. The pleasure of his trip consisted in the knowledge that he had helped a great many people, and in the possession of a splendid man as dog driver, one of unfailing good temper, unselfishness, and readiness to act in emergencies. The travelling was very bad; the snow was so dry and powdery that in spite of snowshoes they sank to their knees at each step. They also experienced several very bad storms, and in spite of the thermometer ranging from five degrees above to twenty-four degrees below zero, the bays were not safe, for the prevalent high winds blew away, or cracked the ice as soon as it formed, and this necessitated going overland and far inland in order to cross the large rivers and rapids. Both men and dogs brought back frostbites on faces and paws.

The doctor leaves again on Monday for a trip to the West. He is indefatigable in the performance of his duty and stays at home only just long enough to rest his dogs and answer his mail. His little three-year-old daughter said to him one day last summer, when he was just starting off again on the launch, 'Where is your home, anyway, father?'

I am finding the days all too short for all I want to do. My classes fill up all the spare time that I do not devote to patients, photography, and letter-writing. I have in my sewing-class twenty-six children who, at the present time, are learning to knit, make samplers, and cut out and make doll's clothes. All the bigger ones have learned to patch, darn, hemstitch, and make button holes. Fourteen come to the basket-making class in which they are intensely interested.

I have a cooking class for the girls who are too old or too much needed by their mothers to be able to go to day-school. They all seem to enjoy the weekly two hours very much, though I flavor my directions with some instruction in hygiene and physiology. My night school twice a week is well attended, and my nursing demonstrations for women are appreciated not a little.

The books we have had sent to us have been a great source of pleasure and instruction to both old and young. You would think on my class days that I kept a circulating library, so many books are exchanged at the end of the lesson. I sent a box of books last summer to the men at the Marconi station at Whittle Rocks, about eighteen miles away; they are so isolated that they are exceedingly glad to get some reading matter.

Thanks to our numerous friends' generosity, we were able to make a great many people happy at Christmas, four hundred and ten in all, from thirty-five miles west to one hundred east of Harrington. Some little ones who had never before seen, much less owned, a doll, were able to rejoice in the possession of one, and when it was one that went to sleep, the bliss was complete. Marbles, knives, pencil boxes, books, engines, blocks, boats, tools, checkers, and boards, delighted the boys; dolls tea sets, work-baskets, handkerchiefs, collars, belts, ribbons, and toy laundry sets, charmed the girls. Handkerchiefs, work-bags, woollen articles, and some charming teapots were given to the women, and to the men some splendid 'comfort-bags,' sent by the Women's Christian Temperance Union, books, and warm woollen articles.

At Harrington we had on Christmas afternoon recitations and songs by the children, after which I told them about the Flower Show and Exhibition I have planned for next September, and we then distributed the presents, which were handed out by Santa Claus. We invited all the men, lads, and boys to come in the evening, when we had hymns, songs, readings, and games, with refreshments, when, for the first time, ice cream was eaten in Harrington. I had bought a White Mountain ice-cream freezer last summer and found that ice-cream could be made most successfully with condensed milk and Bird's custard powder. I think it was approved of, for one guest consumed four saucerfuls, and another would have eaten more if he could have had it hot! The doctor had had to leave for the east on the previous Tuesday so again our Christmas was marred by his absence.

On the following Tuesday, Mrs. Hare, three of her children and I went to the Barachois to have the Christmas tree there. As it is four miles away we went 'on dog,' which means on a komatik drawn by dogs. Several of Harrington's young people went, too, and there were seven teams in all. We had a nice little entertainment of hymns, songs, readings, and recitations, and then distributed the presents with which we had decorated the tree.

A few days after I went to the Sound and gave them their Christmas tree there. When the time came to distribute the presents, I found that I, too, was to share; three frozen rabbits were given to me and made a most welcome change of diet. As the Sound is eleven miles away, I went 'on dog.' The sun was bright, but as there was a wind and the thermometer was at 12 degrees below zero, I had frequently to put my face under cover to keep my nose and cheeks from being frozen.

A ride on a komatik is very enjoyable for the dogs seem to delight in the run as much as we do. They are guided entirely by voice, neither whip nor rein being used. A good head dog is worth a great deal and makes or mars a team. Wonderful tales are told of head dogs which have saved their owners' lives by finding their way unaided through blinding storms over trackless wastes. An ideal team is composed of a mother and two or three successive litters of her pups. They will follow wherever she leads, and do not, as a rule, kill one another.

A most generous friend to the Mission, Mr. J. D. Patterson, of Woodstock, who, with his mother, Mrs. Patterson, has furnished us our operating room, supplied all the ward bedding, and given many other things, sent us by the last steamer, boxes of dried fruit, and two large pails of first-class candies, so that all the children, and many of larger growth, had, in addition to a present, a bag of good things.

EDITH MAYOU.

Religious News.

D. J. Fleming, of Lahore, India, writes to the 'Presbyterian':

Some of you who are in study classes have written asking for information about Mohammedanism in India. Do you realise that the Mohammedan population of India is almost as great as the total population of the United States, and that as India's Emperor, King Edward is the greatest Mohammedan monarch in the world? Three things seem to stand out as noteworthy in the situation:

There is a general tendency toward progress and education. For decades, the backwardness of Mohammedans in all educational matters has been a by-word here. Recently, however, when Sir Louis Dane was laying the corner-stone of the new Mohammedan college of Lahore—itself a sign of the new spirit—he said that out of six Indians admitted within the last few years to the highest posts in the gift of the Government, five had been Mohammedans. Incidentally, it is significant that each of these five was educated in Forman Christian College. All over the province, girls' schools and boys' schools for Mohammedans are springing up, urged on by the enlightened members of the community, in spite of the indifference and opposition which pervades the Mohammedan masses.

There are numerous opportunities to attend summer conferences where missionary work is more or less definitely discussed, and plans are laid for an active campaign. There are this year six student conferences at various centers, an outgrowth of the one at Mount Hermon thirteen years ago, where the Student Volunteer Movement originated.

LESSON,—SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1909.

Paul's Third Missionary Journey—Farewells.

Acts xx., 17-35. Read Acts xx., 2-38. Memory verses 31, 32.

Golden Text.

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. Phil. iv., 13.

Home Readings.

Monday, August 30.—Acts xx., 2-12.
Tuesday, August 31.—Acts xx., 13-24.
Wednesday, September 1.—Acts xx., 25-38.
Thursday, September 2.—Col. i., 21-29.
Friday, September 3.—Col. ii., 1-9.
Saturday, September 4.—II. John.
Sunday, September 5.—II. Tim. iv., 1-8.

FOR THE JUNIOR CLASSES.

We have learnt a lot about how Paul came to one town or another and how he had to leave them generally in a great hurry because there was a riot among the people. That didn't leave him much time to say good-by to any of his friends, did it? At least we haven't studied much in our lessons about how Paul went around wishing his friends good-by in any city, have we? Do you think Paul ever wanted to see his friends and say good-by to them just as you and I do if we are going away? Oh yes, indeed, because he loved some of the people very much and he used to write letters to them afterwards, and I daresay when he was hurrying away from some city or other he would say 'I wish I had had time to see So-and-So. He was very much troubled about something when I saw him last, and I would have liked to thank So-and-So for coming to see me the other day when I was out. Be sure to give them my love and tell them I will pray God to take care of them.' You know he lived and worked and preached for nearly three years in that city called Ephesus and he had a great many friends there, then at the last he had to go away in a hurry because of that riot about the goddess Diana, but he didn't forget his friends there and that he hadn't really said good-by to them. So one day when he was sailing back to Jerusalem and was stopping at a town about thirty miles away from Ephesus, he sent over and asked that some of the people should come and say good-by to him. He thought he would never see them again, because he thought he was likely going to be put in prison again when he got to Jerusalem, so he was very anxious to see these friends from Ephesus. He had to stay at the place where his ship was because he didn't know when it would be ready to go, but the people came from Ephesus very gladly and they had a happy meeting together. So this was one time Paul got a good chance to say good-by, and let us see what he thought was so important to say at such a time as this.

FOR THE SENIORS.

The quantity of work and travel from one church to another that Paul put into a few months, is indicated by the brief summary Luke supplies. Leaving Ephesus earlier than he had intended he had first planned to go to Corinth (II. Cor. i., 15-16), but not knowing how the church there had taken his earlier letter of rather sharp reproof and being far from well (II. Cor. i., 8, 9), he decided to change his route somewhat (II. Cor. ii., 1.) So deeply was he feeling the distress caused by the trouble in Corinth that not hearing from Titus who had gone to find out how matters really stood there, he was unable to settle to the work that plainly offered in Troas (II. Cor. ii., 12, 13), He went instead to Macedonia visiting the churches there and finally hearing a good report from Corinth went on there and stayed some three months (Acts xx., 3.) Hearing of the plots of the Jews he was again forced to change his plans, and instead of sailing direct to Jerusalem to be in time for the Passover, he found it wisest to return through Macedonia. On this trip Luke joined him at Philippi, as the use of the pronoun 'we' indicates (verse 6). Paul seems to have been far from well, but fired with unconquerable energy. He was determined at least to be in Jerusalem in time for Pentecost (verse 16) and anxious as he was to see the good people of Ephesus he would not touch there nor even leave Miletus lest he risk losing his ship. Possibly Luke 'the beloved physician' went with Paul watchfully guarding the enthusiast's health, anyhow he did not again leave him until after the arrival in Rome. Paul expresses his own earnest intention as his being 'bound in the spirit.' This journey to Jerusalem with all its perils, which he considered by no means lightly, was to him a solemn duty and nothing could turn him from it. The spirit of his address to the Ephesian elders may be judged by its effect on them. We have here the picture of a man laboring under intense emotion whose spirit chafed against the limitations of his flesh. But like our Lord he had 'set his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem' knowing well what that would mean. In parting from the Ephesian elders he impressed on them that it was not himself but his message he had sought to exalt, giving to all men alike the simple injunction of repentance and faith. The same burden he laid upon them, warning them of the difficulties that would arise and urging upon them the life of practical self-support and charity towards others as the true Christian ideal.

(SELECTIONS.)

Verse 20.—'I shrank not from declaring unto you anything that was profitable.' Such openness was quite contrary to the religious ideas of the Ephesians. Mysteries, open only to the initiated, abounded at that period; and, as elsewhere, secrecy and esotericism were important elements in Ephesian superstition. Such ideas of a knowledge known only to the enlightened few, who are the 'elect,' the 'spiritual,' the 'knowing ones,' were soon to invade the Church. In his Epistles to the Collossians Paul had to combat its incipient traces.—R. B. Rackham.

Verse 24.—How often Paul draws his figures from the athletic games! Know ye not that they that run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? Even so run, that ye may attain (I. Cor. ix., 24). I press on toward the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. iii., 14). I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness (II. Tim. vii., 8). Here in his speech to the Ephesian elders Paul tells them that as the object of the race is the goal, so the object of his life is the completion of his course, the accomplishing of the ministry assigned him by God; the value of his life to him was not what he might get out of it, but what he might do in it. Just as in the stadium the goal, where the judge sat, reward in hand, was plainly in the view of the runners as they stood at the starting point at the other end, so Paul would have his hearers mindful of the object which it is their aim to reach in their life's course. His own object never changed, and his purpose to attain it never faltered.

Verse 30.—'The most dangerous errors are truths distorted and perverted; truth enough to make some believe them, and error enough to injure or ruin those who do believe. Few fishes are caught with the bare hook of error or falsehood. Even in the New Testament writings no fewer than six of the pioneers of these fatal teachers of error are mentioned as belonging to Ephesus.'—Schaff. 'Hymenaeus and Alexander (I. Tim. i., 20), Phygellus and Hermogenes (II. Tim. i., 15), and Philetus (II. Tim. ii., 17), fulfilled this prediction.'—Cook.

Verse 31.—'Therefore watch.' The Greek word means wake up, 'keep awake,' be alert as a soldier on picket duty. It expresses not a mere act, but a state of wakefulness and watching; the wakefulness and diligence that overlooks no duty, indulges no indolence. The metaphor of the flock is continued, and the picture is of shepherds ever watching each sheep in the flock lest it go astray, and day and night keeping watch over the fold against every attack of robber or ravening wolf. They should watch against dangers, seen and unseen, against wolves in sheep's clothing, against the perversions of the truth. But they should watch still more alertly for the good to be cherished, for opportunities of doing good, for unnoticed qualities that might be developed. Paul's own example had been before them for the space of three years.

Verse 35.—'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' Here we have a word of Christ rescued from sinking into oblivion; a word of Christ with a word of Paul wrapped around it; the level and its setting. (1) It brings greater happiness, more intense. (2) It produces a higher quality of happiness. (3) It is the mark of a nobler character. (4) It is the blessedness of God, who is the Great Giver. (5) It is the blessedness of Christ, who 'came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.' (6) It is the blessedness of heaven, where the inhabitants are ministering spirits. (7) It is the blessedness of the Christian religion, which is founded on love, and lives in loving and giving. (8) It is a blessedness that endures, not like a glass of water, but like a fountain; not like a tune, but like the instrument that sends forth music.

Junior C. E. Topic.

Sunday, September 5.—Topic—Armor we may wear. Eph. vi., 10-17. (Consecration meeting.)

C. E. Topic.

Monday, August 30.—What sin does for man. Rom. i., 18-32.

Tuesday, August 31.—Justification by grace. Rom. v., 1-11.

Wednesday, September 1.—Yielding to God. Rom. vi., 12-23.

Thursday, September 2.—The burden of the flesh. Rom. vii., 14-25.

Friday, September 3.—Freedom by the Spirit. Rom. viii., 1-17.

Saturday, September 4.—Fulness of redemption. Rom. viii., 18-30.

Sunday, September 5.—Topic—Life lessons for me from the book of Romans. Rom. xii., 1-21. (Consecration meeting.)

The Opportunity of Summer

During the coming summer unlimited opportunities for open-air services are at the disposal of God's people; and we earnestly urge that the fact should be laid to heart as it never has been before. In theory Evangelical Christians recognize the duty and privilege, yet in the majority of cases the open-air service is treated as a mere adjunct to that within doors. Nor would it be too much to say that it is frequently relegated to less experienced leaders. There are greater difficulties to be met than in dealing with a seated congregation; but it has been abundantly proved that energy and ability may be expected to lead to more rapid progress here than in any other direction.—'Christian.'

Sunday School Offer.

Any school in Canada that does not take the 'Messenger' may have it supplied free on trial for three weeks on request of Superintendent, Secretary or Pastor, stating the number of copies required.

BOYS

If you would like a nice rubber pad, with your own name and address, also a self-inking pad—all for a little work, drop us a card and we will tell you about it. Splendid for marking your books, etc. Address, John Dougall & Son, 'Witness' Office, Montreal.

Correspondence

ROYAL LEAGUE OF KINDNESS.

I pledge myself
To speak kindly to others,
To speak kindly of others,
To think kind thoughts,
To do kind deeds.

Anyone may become a member of the R. L. of K. by copying out the above pledge, signing and sending it to the editor.

PLEDGE CARDS.—For those who wish to have them, we issue neat and durable pledge cards, 4 inches by 6, printed in purple and white, and ready to hang on the wall. Single cards, five cents and two cents for postage; six cards to one address, twenty-five cents and two cents for postage.

BADGES.—We also issue for sale with the pledge card, if desired, a neat brooch pin of fine hard enamel, in the above design of a bow in our own league colors, purple and white. Single badge with pledge card, and postage included, twenty-five cents; five badges with pledge cards and postage included to one address, one dollar.

Mark all orders on both envelope and letter with the three letters R.L.K.

V. H., Ont.

Dear Editor,—I have been in the hospital with the smallpox, and my little sister Reta too. We had a good time while there, but I was glad to get home again. Mother was with me, so I was not lonesome. I gained two pounds since I've been away. I go to school and like it very much. They are building a brick schoolhouse and I am glad.

LAURA M. BALL (age 11).

A. H., N.S.

Dear Editor,—I thought I would write a letter to the 'Messenger,' as I have never before. I go to school every day that I can. I am eight years old and am in Grade Five. I have been going to school about two years. My sister takes the 'Messenger.' I went for a visit and had a nice time. We have two cats and two kittens, and one is mine. We have two pear trees and about a dozen apple trees. Some of the apples will soon be ripe. We have currant bushes, and a quince tree, and two gooseberry bushes. It is a very pretty place here. I must close for this time.

ROBBIE M.

A., Man.

Dear Editor,—This is my first letter to the 'Messenger.' I like the stories in your paper very much, and read them every time I get it. My chum and I are going away on Thursday. My chum's name is Annie. We have company in the house, so I have to write on the veranda. I wish to join your club. I will close with a riddle:—Why do you stew an oyster?

AUDREY B.

C., Man.

Dear Editor,—This is my first letter to the 'Messenger.' I am going away on Thursday on my summer holidays. I am having lots of fun without going away. I go to Sunday School and I get your paper. I like it very much. I wish to join your club.

ANNIE T.

[We will be glad to welcome you and Audrey to our League, but you must first copy out the pledge at the top of the page, sign it and send it to us, and addressed:—

Editor of the 'Messenger,'
'Witness' Office,
Montreal.

—Ed.]

—, ———.

Dear Editor,—I am a little girl six years old and a half. I live five blocks from Sunday School. We have some nice pets, a parrot Lora, a dog Trixie, and a canary Francis. I have one sister, her name is Marjorie. She is ten. I will close with a riddle:—When is a ferry not a ferry?

WINIFRED M.

OUR PICTURES.

1. 'Crossing the Channel in an Airship.' R. Coles, V., Quebec.
2. 'S. S. Seacrest.'
3. 'Sprays.' Audrey B. (age 9), C., Man.
4. 'My Pet Rabbit.'
5. 'Our House.' Francis Fraser (age 15), M., P.Q.
6. 'The Angel.'

NEW TESTAMENT ALPHABET.

[Our readers will write in spaces indicated the name of person, place or event, and book, chapter and verse.]

A stands for those who came to bring
Glad tidings of the new-born king.
B stands for that interesting place
Where men first saw the Saviour's face.
?— B?— C. v.?—
C stands for Him to whom is given
The highest name in earth or heaven.
With D that city is begun
Where light once paled the mid-day sun.
?— B?— C. v.?—
E stands for where the Infant Lord
Was safely kept from Herod's sword.
F stands for one who said to Paul
That he for him some time would call.
?— B?— C. v.?—
And G stands for that inland sea
Where oft the Saviour loved to be.
H stands to tell of what became
To some a most dishonored name.
?— B?— C. v.?—
I marks the lonely region where
To John came visions grand and fair.
J must that city's name begin
Where Jesus died for human sin.
?— B?— C. v.?—
K stands for something great and grand
Which John declared to be at hand.
L stands for one whom Christ the Lord
From death to life and health restored.
?— B?— C. v.?—
M marks the name of one of those
Whom Jesus for apostles chose.
And N stands for that city's name
Where back to life a young men came.
?— B?— C. v.?—
And O stands for the place from where
The Lord ascended through the air.
P marks that point of time when came
The promised power like tongues of flame.
?— B?— C. v.?—
And Q stands for that faithful friend
Who did a brother's greetings send.
R in that city's name appears
Where Paul was kept for two whole years.
?— B?— C. v.?—
And S must of that province tell
Where Jesus came to Jacob's well.
T for that holy church that stands
Which was not built with human hands.
?— B?— C. v.?—
U stands for something strong and deep
Which all believers are to keep.
V stands for that in which we read
Of Him who will supply our need.
?— B?— C. v.?—
And W stands for people who
Desired the new-born king to know.
X is in form like that in Greek
Which stands for Him of whom we speak.
?— B?— C. v.?—
Y tells of that which for His sake
All those who love the Lord will take.
And Z stands for that city blest
Where saints enjoy the promised rest.

T. WATSON.

Life.

(Adapted from the Swedish.)

One day, when the birds had sung themselves quite weary, a long pause ensued, broken at last by a philosophical chaffinch in these words:

'What is life?'

They were rather startled at this interruption, but a little warbler answered at once:

'Life is a song.'

'No, it is a struggle in darkness,' said a mole, who had just succeeded in getting his head above the ground.

'I think it is a development,' said a wild rosebud, as she unfolded her petals one by one to the delight of a butterfly who came to kiss her, and who exclaimed:

'Life is all enjoyment!'

'Call it rather a short summer's day,' hummed a little fly as it passed by.

'I cannot see in it anything but hard work,' was the lamentation of a small ant, as she struggled on with a straw ever so much too big for her.

The magpie only laughed to cover his own poverty of thought. The general indignation at such levity might easily have produced a quarrel, had not at that moment the rain began to fall, whispering sadly:

'Life is made up of tears.'

'You are all mistaken,' called out the eagle, as he sailed through the air on his majestic wings. 'Life is freedom and strength.'

Meanwhile it had grown dark, and a practical-minded bullfinch proposed that they should go to rest. And the night wind rustled softly through the leaves: 'Life is a dream.'

Silence lay over town and country, and the dawn was near, when the scholar in his lonely room extinguished his lamp and said: 'Life is but a school.'

While the youth, returning from a night of revelry, moaned in his heart: 'It is one long desire, ever unfulfilled.'

'It is an eternal mystery,' whispered fitfully the new-born morning breeze.

Then suddenly a rosy light spread over the horizon and tinged with its glow the tips of the forest trees as it rose into the sky. And as the morning kissed the awakening earth, a mighty harmony rang through the world: 'Life is a beginning.'—'League Journal.'

BOYS AND GIRLS

How Esther Worked it Out

(Amelia H. Botsford, in the 'Presbyterian Banner.')

The Rev. Herbert Moore was silent and abstracted, and his wife was well aware that he was pondering his next sermon. She had grown so used to watching his face that she could tell how far he had progressed, whether he was developing his illustrations, or merely outlining the divisions, or whether he was still at a loss for his text. Suddenly aware of her scrutiny, he looked up.

'Herbert,' she said, slowly and thoughtfully, 'I wonder if you would care to use a suggestion from me this week. You have not yet decided on your topic?'

'No, dear, I have been considering several, but do not feel satisfied with any of them. What was it you wanted to suggest?'

'As you know, the Academy closes this week. Ordinarily, the young people would be scattered to their homes before Sunday, but this time Judge Conway gives a party for his daughter, who is one of the graduates. It will occur next week, and so most of the older students will be in town over Sunday. I know the old-fashioned sermon on Commencement day is out of date here, but this is your last chance to say something that will influence these young lives. I had thought you might preach direct to them in your next sermon.'

'It is a good idea, wife,' he said, thoughtfully. 'If one could say the right word to influence young lives at this important time it would be a rare privilege. I wonder if I have a message for them.'

'Make your talk practical,' she said, decidedly.

'Perhaps you would better sketch the sermon out for me,' he said, with a smile. 'I do not doubt but a woman might have a keener insight into the hearts of young people than a man. What would you say?'

She shook her head.

'I'll not write your sermon for you, sir, but I will give you a text: "Freely ye have received, freely give."'

When Sabbath morning came the minister looked down from his pulpit on groups of bright young faces and felt how solemn was the task of speaking a word in season to these souls who might never again pass his way.

No doubt they were scarcely in the mood for serious thought. The excitement of Commencement had engrossed their minds during the week, and they were now looking forward to the closing gayety of their school life. It was not strange that Esther Selden's thoughts wandered at first. She had listened to the text, which did not seem to promise anything of special interest to her.

After a little she roused herself from her reverie and began to listen more attentively to what the preacher was saying.

He was talking of the utter dependence of the child as a fact markedly in contrast with the ability of the lower animals to care for themselves from birth. The human being is the most helpless of all young things. Without constant care it would soon perish. For many weeks it can do nothing for itself, but must receive all things from the love of those surrounding it.

From vividly picturing the helpless babe the preacher proceeded to point out what the child and then the youth received in training from parents and teachers. Then he led the thought to the gifts that come directly from God: 'The gift of life with all its possibilities is yours, life in its freshness, the overflowing life one feels only in youth. And this life He has given you is the gift of love, for "He loved us into being." Eternal life He is ready and anxious to give you—that, too, the gift of love. The love that made the world would save the world. All things are yours, and ye are Christ's and Christ is God's. / Should it not overwhelm us to meditate on what we have received?'

After a few more words to enlarge on these points he turned to the other half of the text: Freely give. 'Life has hitherto been all receiving; it is time that you should pause at this threshold of active life and consider: Is it not time now to give? Give love, for that comprehends all things. Love in the heart enlightens the eyes, rules the will, speaks in pleasant words from the lips and speeds hands and feet in helpful work. Love to God and to your neighbor is the fulfilment of the law.

'Of the individual problems that face you as you leave the school behind and enter on the real work of life, I have no knowledge,' he continued; 'I can say no definite word to aid you in their solution. Life will doubtless be hard for some of you, and none will escape testing. Even the trivial duties of a commonplace life have power like nitric acid and show what is gold and what alloy. Every life has opportunities, and none is so poor in resource that it may not be made noble by freely giving as you have freely received. Do not choose to go through the world a mendicant, seeking alms from all you meet; make your life rather a royal progress, bestowing largess everywhere as you pass on.'

* * * *

It seemed strange to Esther to be home again; to wake in the bare little bedroom under the eaves, and see stained plaster instead of the photographs and dainty trifles of her den at school. A hasty glance from the window showed the woodpile in the backyard, and a glimpse of a dusty country road. It had been familiar to her from her childhood, but never before had the surroundings seemed so sordid and dreary. What could there be in life if it were to be spent in this dull spot? Should she not use her education as a means to get away as soon as possible? She saw her father trudging out to the barn and heard her mother's footsteps as she plodded around the kitchen, getting that wearisome breakfast which would have to be got to-morrow and to-morrow in dreary succession.

'I wonder how she can endure it,' said Esther to herself. 'Now she is coming upstairs to dress the children. How fretful Dottie is! I heard Ned cry with the earache in the night and I suppose mother was up with him a good deal.'

She dropped the brush with which she was smoothing out her hair.

'And is this the way you keep your good resolutions,' she said, addressing the girl in the glass. 'Esther, I am ashamed of you. Have you forgotten already that you were to give back love to these patient, self-denying ones who have done everything for you all your good-for-nothing life? And you were really considering how you could get away from home instead of planning how you could help with its burdens? Set your wits to work, and if the life does not suit you see what you can do to improve it. What is the use of an education if it does not fit you to master the problems of life instead of dodging them?'

All day as Esther went about the household duties she pondered how she could be of use in the home. Her mother was certainly overworking, yet Esther did not feel sure that she ought to give up her plan of teaching and stay at home to help about the work. It might be that the money she earned would be of more help than her work in the kitchen. And as she thought she noticed how many steps which might better be saved were required by the inconvenient arrangements in the house. 'Some of these things, at least, I will try to have changed,' she concluded.

That night, when the dishes had been done and the milk attended to, she coaxed her mother out on the porch where her father was resting in a splint-bottomed chair.

'The children are all right,' said Esther, 'I have tucked them up in bed and heard them say their prayers. I want you to come out, for father is there and we can have a talk together.'

Mrs. Selden allowed herself to be drawn outdoors, and established in a rocking-chair.

'This does seem good,' she said, as she sank wearily down. 'Why, I haven't had a chance to sit down out here for a month; I am always so busy at night.'

'You work too hard, mother,' said Esther, gently.

'That she does,' corroborated her husband. 'It would be a good thing if she could have you home to help her, Esther, but I suppose you are planning to get a place to teach. I've been asking about the schools in Denham, and folks tell me you wouldn't have much of a chance there unless you took a course at the Normal. Without that all you could expect would be a position to substitute. Maybe you are planning to go to the Normal this winter, but it seems to me you have been away to school a long time as it is. What do you think?'

'I do not wish to leave home again for study. How about the school at Stockbridge, or the one at Porter? Both those villages are near. Do you think I could get a position in either?'

'I am sure you could, but the pay would be small, and I did not suppose you would be satisfied to take a place in a country school.'

'But I could board at home then, walking back and forth in good weather and catching a ride when storms came. I would help nights and mornings and have all day Saturday and Sunday with my own folks. Those are advantages the city school would not give me.'

'I would be glad to drive over with you in bad weather,' said the father. 'It would be no trouble to get you there if you were suited to try the school. And as you would not have board to pay the wages would not seem quite so small. We'd be pleased enough, daughter, for mother and I have seen little of our girl these last years, and it is a pity to lose her as soon as she is able to be some help and comfort.'

'You are not going to lose me,' said Esther, decidedly. 'But I will be home much of the time to help mother. I know she is tired, and I would like to have her take life easier.'

Mr. Selden sighed.

'We are neither of us as young as we used to be.'

'I have been thinking up schemes to save mother steps,' said Esther. 'I want you to listen, and consider this seriously. The house is not arranged conveniently. We have to go the length of the dining-room and then of the kitchen to reach the pantry. This makes a great many unnecessary steps every day. A little window, or slide could be out between the dining-room and pantry, which would help save a great many of them. I believe you could do the work yourself, and the expense would be slight.

'What do you say, mother?' asked Mr. Selden. 'I do not take much stock in contrivances generally, but if this would be any satisfaction to you I could do it as Esther suggests.'

'It really would be a fine thing, father,' replied Mrs. Selden. 'It would save time as well as steps, and I could get a meal on the table quicker. I do wish you would do it, and right away.'

That was the beginning of changes which enlisted Mr. Selden's aid about the house. He was handy with tools, and had little difficulty in fitting the proposed slide. His wife was so delighted over the convenience and expressed her pleasure so warmly that Mr. Selden's heart was touched. Did little things really mean so much to a woman? It was a pity he had not done it before. The way was thus paved for the larger tasks Esther planned.

'Father,' she said, one evening, 'have you ever heard the saying that "Women and stairs don't mix"?'

'I don't know that I have, but I reckon that it is true enough. It stands to reason that a woman could do the work easier on a level than when she is running up and down all the time. It wears a woman out. And you have some scheme, I know. Out with it. To put in elevators?'

'Not exactly,' laughed Esther, 'though a

WATER-WINGS.

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dumb waiter from the cellar would be a very good thing. But this is my plan. You know that when Dottie was a baby mother slept in the little room off the kitchen so as to be downstairs with the children.'

'Yes, but that room is too small to hold Dottie's crib and the boys' bed. When the little folks grew bigger she had to move upstairs.'

'I know. But this is the idea that came to me. The long woodshed is at the back of that little room. It would be possible to partition off another bedroom from the end of the woodshed for the boys, open a door into it from mother's room, and she would have her little folks under her eye and on the ground floor. She would not have to go upstairs at all, for I would keep that part of the house in order.'

'It might be a good thing,' said the father, thoughtfully, 'but I fear it would cost too much.'

'It would not be necessary to plaster,' urged Esther. 'The room could be made quite warm with building paper or felt, some of those substitutes that are used now-a-days. Perhaps if you had a carpenter for a day you could do the rest yourself, and there would not be much material to buy.'

After talking the matter over and getting an estimate of expense Mr. Selden was won to Esther's plan, and going energetically to work soon had a nice little room for the two boys. The comfort the mother took in having all her work on the one floor only a woman could understand. And best of all was the fact that loving thoughts had planned it for her and the love of her own folks done the work. Thinking and doing for each other was drawing the members of the family closer together every day.

'How different it seems to have Esther home,' said the father, confidentially, one night. 'Do you know she seems to take as much interest in the farm as if she were a boy?'

'A son of her age would be a great help to you about the work, father,' said the wife.

'Yes, indeed,' assented Mr. Selden. 'But Esther really has a good idea of agriculture. And I am going to the Farmers' Institute this fall and want you and her to go, too. I guess I have been getting into a rut and I mean to get out. Some new ideas won't hurt me. Esther and I have been talking things over; she has subscribed for two papers, and sent for a lot of bulletins from the Department of Agriculture at Washington. I'm beginning to think brains will count as much as strength in farming, and Esther has the brains. She and I have formed a partnership and the firm means to do great things next year. Tell you we are getting the good of Esther and her education this year, aren't we? Lucky thing for us she did not go to the city to teach.'

'And for the school at North Porter, too,' chimed in the mother. 'Every one says it is the best school they ever had in the village. The big boys and girls are getting so interested. Esther is a first-rate teacher, I guess. I know she helps the boys at home and they are doing better than they ever did before. She puts her heart into the work. It beats all how fast the time goes while she is home.'

'That is what I say, too,' said Esther, coming in as the last words were said. 'Time has fairly flown since I left school. I've been busy and happy every minute.'

'You have been busy doing for others,' said her mother, fondly. 'You are a good girl, Esther. I feared you would find life here too dull for you, but you do not seem to, and you have made life worth more to the rest of us.

'That is sweet to hear,' said Esther, with shining eyes.

'You did not use to be so thoughtful of us all,' said her mother. 'What has come over you lately, Esther?'

The girl only laughed and kissed them both, but when her mother pressed for an answer she said, gravely:

'I concluded that it was time I should make some return for all I have been receiving all my life; that to be a true child of God I must give, not simply take. There is something worth thinking about that I learned from one of my favorite poems:

'Rejoice we are allied
To that which doth provide
And not partake, effect and not receive!
A spark disturbs our clod;
Nearer we hold of God
Who gives, than of His tribes that take, I must believe.'

So Mr. Moore's sermon found an application.

The Crossways.

Sibyl, her pretty, girlish face angry and mutinous, dashed from the room, slamming the door behind her. In the silence that followed, her last words still seemed to echo.

'It isn't fair—just because you're the oldest and have always had things, that we should never have anything. It's our turn. How would you have liked it when you were eighteen? You've had your good times. It's just downright selfish of you not to let us have ours, and I'm going to say it out for once, so now!'

Virginia drew a long breath. It had been 'said out' unquestionably. Going to the door, she turned the key. It had been coming for a long time—some such crisis as this; now that it had come, she was going to face it without flinching. She seated herself before her dressing table, and looked steadily in the glass. Yes, it was true—she was not so pretty as she had been; the first girlish bloom was gone—gone to Sibyl and Evelyn.

'Point one,' she said, slowly. 'Virginia Crane, you are jealous of your little sisters.

Point two. Sibyl is right. You've had your good times, and it is their turn.

'Point three. Something must be done at once. What shall it be?'

There was a long silence after the third point. Virginia was thinking. There were several things she might do. She could go abroad with the Clarendons. She thought that over a while, and then put it aside. 'I won't shirk!' she declared. She could take up settlement work, for instance. That, too, she rejected.

'It wouldn't,' she said, with grim humor, 'be fair to the poor. They have enough to bear without having to help out the poor rich.'

There remained one way, a very distasteful one, but she could do it—at least, she could give it a trial. She would study the art of being an old sister. It would not be easy for her to step aside gracefully, not half so easy as for some girls, but she could try; she could study it as she had studied over her music. For an hour she sat there, thinking it out. Then she opened her door.

'Sibyl!' she called.

Sibyl, half-ashamed and half-defiant, came hesitatingly.

'I've changed my mind about the concert, Virginia said. 'You are right—it is your turn. I'll stay and entertain Aunt Gracia. And would you like to wear my string of pearls to your party?'

Sibyl stared in bewilderment, the color flooding her face. 'Oh, Virginia,' she gasped, 'do you mean it? I——' impetuously she threw her arms about her sister's neck—'I was such a horrid pig!' she cried.

And suddenly to Virginia there came a strange thought. Suppose in the 'good times' she were missing the joy of being a sister!—'Southern Cross.'

The Boy That Lives on our Farm

The boy lives on our farm, he's not
  Afeard o' horses none!
An' he can make 'em lope, er trot,
  Er rack, er pace, er run.
Sometimes he drives two horses, when
  He comes to town an' brings
A waggonful o' taters nen,
  An' roastin' ears an' things.

Two horses is 'a team,' he says—
  An' when you drive er hitch,
The right-un's a 'near horse,' I guess,
  Er 'off'—I don't know which.
The boy lives on our farm, he told
  Me, too, 'at he can see,
By lookin' at their teeth, how old
  A horse is, to a T!

I'd be the gladdest boy alive
  Ef I knowded much as that,
An' could stand up like him an' drive
  An' jist push back my hat,
Like he comes skallyhootin' through
  Our alley, with one arm
A-wavin' fare-ye-well! to you—
  The boy lives on our farm!

—'Farming World.'

An Indian Holy Man.

(The Rev. R. R. Johnson, B.A., Gogha, in 'Daybreak.')

When I was a boy I often heard missionaries speak of the strange means to which the people of India resort in order to get rid of their sins. They told us men would sometimes fast for long periods, others would stand on one leg for a long time, others sleep on spiked beds, whilst others take a vow never to speak again.

Once, in a big religious fair, I saw a devotee hanging by his feet from a tree, but with that exception I had never come across any of these ascetics till a few days ago. Then I saw a man who has taken a vow of silence. He lives in a small hut made of grass and mud not far from Hatbab where we are at present encamped. His hut is close to the sea-shore. I suppose there are two reasons why he built it there. One is, that near by is a famous idol which he worships, an idol over which the sea washes at every tide; and the other, that beside the hut there is a step-well with very good water in it. Round the well he has planted red oleanders and other flowering shrubs, and in time he will have a pretty little garden where there was once only sand and coarse grass.

Such a queer looking old chap as he is! He has very long hair and long straggly beard, a short leg, stiff at the knee so that he cannot straighten it, wears the minimum of clothing, sleeps on a bed whose 'mattress' is a big, flat stone with a deer skin over it, and never leaves the immediate precincts of his hut, unless it is to worship the idol, or to chase away wicked fishermen, who, he thinks, are going to commit sin by catching fish, and thus taking life.

I had heard of his vow, and went down to try to draw him into a conversation. It was a very peculiar and rather one-sided conversation, but I got most of his history by questions which he answered by signs. He belongs to a village about five miles away, and is an ascetic's son. Like most Indian 'holy men' he was none too good in his youth, so a year ago he took a vow not to speak for twenty-five years, thus making sure he would not sin with his tongue. Then, to ensure a comfortable living, he came and settled in his present place near several flourishing villages, whose inhabitants, he knew, would see he lacked nothing they could supply. From conversations with some of the villagers I find that people go every day to see him, taking with them food of every kind, and, judging by the man's figure, he does not go in for much self-denial in the eating line. I asked some of his followers why they fed a lazy man like him. They replied it was to gain merit. They seemed to think a special kind of sanctity belonged to a man who was under such a vow, and they could see no harm in him making himself insensible by smoking bhang.* 'It helps him to concentrate his thoughts on God,' they said.

They told me of another form of austerity he practices. In May, when the sun is so hot that in the middle of the day all field work stops, and even the hardest headed farm laborers seek shelter from its burning rays in the shade of a tree or under a roof, this ascetic lights four fires within about five feet of each other, and then sits down in the middle, and sits till he is nearly roasted alive, and all the while the sun's scorching rays are pouring down on his bare head. This is another way in which, according to the Hindus, the stains of sin can be removed.

It is to tell people, with such peculiar ideas, God's way of salvation through Jesus Christ that your missionaries preach and teach, work and pray. May all our readers be ready to help in this great work in whatever way God opens up for them.

*Indian hemp, the smoking of which acts on the mind like opium, first exciting and then stupifying.

The wisest man could ask no more of fate
Than to be simple, modest, manly, true,
Safe from the many, honored by the few;
Nothing to crave in Church or World or State,
But inwardly in secret to be great.

—Lowell.

What the Moon Saw.

(By Hans C. Andersen. Translated by H. W. Dulcken, Ph.D.)

(Continued.)

ELEVENTH EVENING.

'It was the City of the Dead; only Vesuvius thundered forth his everlasting hymn, each separate verse of which is called by men an eruption. We went to the temple of Venus, built of snow-white marble, with its high altar in front of the broad steps, and the weeping willows sprouting freshly forth among the pillars. The air was transparent and blue, and black Vesuvius formed the background, with fire ever shooting forth from it, like the stem of the pine tree. Above it stretched the smoky cloud in the silence of the night, like the crown of the pine, but in a blood-red illumination. Among the company was a lady singer, a real and great singer. I have witnessed the homage paid to her in the greatest cities of Europe. When they came to the tragic theatre, they all sat down on the amphitheatre steps, and thus a small part of the house was occupied by an audience, as it had been many centuries ago. The stage still stood unchanged, with its walled side-scenes, and the two arches in the background, through which the beholders saw the same scene that had been exhibited in the old times—a scene painted by nature herself, namely, the mountains between Sorento and Amalfi. The singer gaily mounted the ancient stage, and sang. The place inspired her, and she reminded me of a wild Arab horse, that rushes headlong on with snorting nostrils and flying mane—her song was so light and yet so firm. Anon I thought of the mourning mother beneath the cross at Golgotha, so deep was the expression of pain. And, just as it had done thousands of years ago, the sound of applause and delight now filled the theatre. "Happy, gifted creature!" all the hearers exclaimed. Five minutes more, and the stage was empty, the company had vanished, and not a sound more was heard—all were gone. But the ruins stood unchanged, as they will stand when centuries shall have gone by, and when none shall know of the momentary applause and of the triumph of the fair songstress; when all will be forgotten and gone, and even for me this hour will be but a dream of the past.'

TWELFTH EVENING.

'It looked through the windows of an editor's house,' said the Moon. 'It was somewhere in Germany. I saw handsome furniture, many books, and a chaos of newspapers. Several young men were present: the editor himself stood at his desk, and two little books, both by young authors, were to be noticed. "This one has been sent to me," said he. "I have not read it yet; what think 'you' of the contents?" "Oh," said the person addressed—he was a poet himself—"it is good enough; a little broad, certainly; but, you see, the author is still young. The verses might be better, to be sure; the thoughts are sound, though there is certainly a good deal of common-place among them. But what will you have? You can't be always getting something new. That he'll turn out anything great I don't believe, but you may safely praise him. He is well read, a remarkable Oriental scholar, and has a good judgment. It was he who wrote that nice review of my "Reflections on Domestic Life." We must be lenient towards the young man."

'"But he is a complete hack!" objected another of the gentlemen. "Nothing is worse in poetry than mediocrity, and he certainly does not go beyond this."

'"Poor fellow," observed a third, "and his aunt is so happy about him. It was she, Mr. Editor, who got together so many subscribers for your last translation."

'"Ah, the good woman! Well, I have noticed the book briefly. Undoubted talent—a welcome offering—a flower in the garden of poetry—prettily brought out—and so on. But this other book—I suppose the author expects me to purchase it? I hear it is praised. He has genius, certainly: don't you think so?"

'"Yes, all the world declares as much," replied the poet, "but it has turned out rather wildly. The punctuation of the book, in particular, is very eccentric."

'"It will be good for him if we pull him to pieces, and anger him a little, otherwise he will get too good an opinion of himself."

'"But that would be unfair," objected the fourth. "Let us not carp at little faults, but rejoice over the real and abundant good that we find here: he surpasses all the rest."

'"Not so. If he is a true genius, he can bear the sharp voice of censure. There are people enough to praise him. Don't let us quite turn his head."

'"Decided talent," wrote the editor, "with the usual carelessness. That he can write incorrect verses may be seen in page 25, where there are two false quantities. We recommend him to study the ancients, etc."

'I went away,' continued the Moon, 'and looked through the windows in the aunt's house. There sat the be-praised poet, the 'tame' one; all the guests paid homage to him, and he was happy.

'I sought the other poet out, the "wild" one; him also I found in a great assembly at his patron's, where the tame poet's book was being discussed.

'I shall read yours also," said Maecenas; "but to speak honestly—you know I never hide my opinion from you—I don't expect much from it, for you are much too wild, too fantastic. But it must be allowed that, as a man, you are highly respectable."

'A young girl sat in a corner; and she read in a book these words:

'"In the dust lies genius and glory,
But ev'ry-day talent will 'pay.'
It's only the old, old story,
But the piece is repeated each day."'

THIRTEENTH EVENING.

The Moon said, 'Beside the woodland path there are two small farmhouses. The doors are low, and some of the windows are placed quite high, and others close to the ground; and whitehorn and barberry bushes grow around them. The roof of each house is overgrown with moss and with yellow flowers and houseleek. Cabbage and potatoes are the only plants cultivated in the gardens, but out of the hedge there grows a willow tree, and under this willow tree sat a little girl, and she sat with her eyes fixed upon the old oak tree between the two huts.

'It was an old withered stem. It had been sawn off at the top, and a stork had built his nest upon it; and he stood in this nest clapping with his beak. A little boy came and stood by the girl's side: they were brother and sister.

'"What are you looking at?" he asked.

'"I'm watching the stork,' she replied: "our neighbors told me that he would bring us a little brother or sister to-day; let us watch to see it come!"

'"The stork brings no such things," the boy declared, "you may be sure of that. Our neighbor told me the same thing, but she laughed when she said it, and so I asked her if she could say "On my honor," and she could not; and I know by that that the story about the storks is not true, and that they only tell it to us children for fun."

'"But where do the babies come from, then?" asked the girl.

'"Why, an angel from heaven brings them under his cloak, but no man can see him; and that's why we never know when he brings them."

WATCHING THE STORK.

'At that moment there was a rustling in the branches of the willow tree, and the children folded their hands and looked at one another: it was certainly the angel coming with the baby. They took each other's hand, and at that moment the door of one of the houses opened, and the neighbor appeared.

'"Come in, you two," she said. "See what the stork has brought. It is a little brother."

'And the children nodded gravely at one another, for they had felt quite sure already that the baby was come.'

(To be Continued.)

'Quit You Like Men.'

(By the Late Rev. Dr. Norman McLeod.)

Courage, brother! do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble;
Trust in God and do the right.

Let the road be rough and dreary,
And its end far out of sight;
Foot it bravely, strong or weary,
Trust in God and do the right.

Perish policy and cunning,
Perish all that fears the light;
Whether losing, whether winning,
Trust in God and do the right.

Trust no party, sect, or faction,
Trust no leaders in the fight;
But in every word and action
Trust in God and do the right.

LITTLE FOLKS

Little Black Solomon.

(Emma C. Dowd, in 'Zion's Herald.')

Claire was sitting up in bed waiting for the doctor. She had been sick for a fortnight, but now was almost well again. Dr. Bell was down in the hall talking with her mother, and in a minute they would both come upstairs to her. Sometimes the doctor brought her a little gift. Yesterday it was a nest of three pretty pill boxes. She wondered if he would have anything for her to-day.

The door opened, and in came Dr. Bell, a puffed-out paper held carefully in one hand.

'You never could guess what I've brought you,' he said. Then he put the paper on the bed, and uncovered the wretchedest specimen of a little black crow that ever you saw.

'O-o-h!' cried Claire.

'I found him by the side of the road over on the mountain,' said the doctor. 'I kenw he would lie there, for he isn't old enough to fly, so I thought I'd bring him to you. If he lives, he'll make you a fine pet, though he isn't very handsome at present.'

'O, I shall just love him, I know I shall!' Claire exclaimed, delightedly.

Master Crow cocked a bright eye up at her in a way to make them all laugh, and Dr. Bell said:

'O, I shouldn't wonder if he turned out to be a regular Solomon for wisdom!'

'I'll call him Solomon!' cried Claire. 'Wouldn't that be a good name?'

And so Solomon it was.

The bird grew fast, both wise and handsome, and by the time Claire was quite well her pet was able to fly. At first there was talk of clipping his wings; but the little girl could not bear to have it done, so he was left to use his beautiful wings to fly away with if he chose. But Solomon did not choose. Occasionally he would be gone for hours but he was sure to come back at dusk, and rap on the window with his strong bill. On being admitted, he would utter a joyful 'Caw! caw!'

Once Claire looked out in the yard to see Solomon talking to a whole flock of crows, and she trembled lest he should be coaxed away; but her pet had no idea of leaving his home, and after awhile the strangers departed.

Solomon was fond of anything bright, and the family had to keep their coins out of sight. Occasionally they wanted extra milk, so they set a pail out on the steps, dropped the pennies in, to pay for the milk, and put on the cover. Once or twice the money was missing, and then naughty Solomon was caught carefully taking off the pail cover and grabbing the coins.

All the neigbors knew Solomon, and he paid them frequent visits; but, whenever he was not wanted, all they had to do was to say, 'Go home!' and off he would fly at once.

Claire missed him one day, and wondered what had become of him. He did not appear for dinner or supper. At bedtime he had not come, and she feared her pet had gone forever. The next night he was still away; but before she went to sleep she heard his familiar 'Caw! caw!' and she jumped up to open the window. But such a Solomon! His feathers were rumpled, and his tail was gone!

Where he had been nobody has ever found out, but for days he seemed afraid to leave the house. Now he always returns home by nightfall, and Claire looks forward to having Solomon for a pet for fifty years to come.

Recitation.

Praise the Lord.

The birds are warbling in the wood,
The bees are in the clover,
We, too, rejoice; for God is good,
And heaven's blue is over.
Come out! come out! the lambkins bleat;
Come out! the birds are crying;
Come out! come out! The day is sweet,
And summer fast a-flying.
Come out and praise the Lord.

The clouds are sailing through the air
The breezes joys are bringing,
The sun is shining everywhere—
All nature is a singing.
Come out! come out! the flowers call;
Come out! the bees are humming;
Come out of doors ye children all;
The frost will soon be coming—
Come out and praise the Lord!

Oh, who could pine on day like this!
Oh, who could have a sorrow?
Then come and share the rbin's bliss,
The skies may rain to-morrow.
Come out! come out! the winds repeat,
Come out! the pines are sighing,
Come out! come out! the day is sweet,
And summer fast a-flying—
Come out and praise the Lord!
—Louise Dalton in 'Ave Maria,' 1891.

'Here am I.'

Nannie! Nannie! came the mother's voice from the foot of the stairs. But Nannie, curled up on the window seat, in the upper hall, never moved a bit, never acted as if she heard the call even, because all her thoughts were in the book which she held on her lap.

'Nannie, I want you dear,' came another call.

'Oh dear! Just as I was at such an int'resting part of the story. Now what does mamma want. Yes'm. what is it?'

'Come dear. I want you to go down to the store on an errand for me.'

'Now isn't that awful mean, cause I'll have to leave my book, and I don't want to go one little single bit.'

Then Nannie threw the book onto the cushions, and almost scuffed down stairs to the sunny sewing room where her mother was waiting for her.

Mamma noticed the frown on the usually merry face, but didn't say anything about it, nor did she say a word when the outside door shut after Nannie with a most decided little slam.

Big Mr. Bowen, at the store, looked at the small maiden and her frown, and said with a twinkle in his eye :

'Where is the sunshine all gone this morning, Nannie?'

Nannie tried to hold onto her frown, but felt it slip, slipping away as she said,

'I didn't want to come, I wanted to read a book.'

'So you glared and growled at your nice mother as much as you dared, and you slammed the door, now didn't you?'

'Why, how did you know?' asked Nannie, her eyes big with wonder.

'Oh?' because you looked as if you had. A slammed door was right in your face when I first saw you. And there your little mother sits sewing on a pretty little dress for you to wear at Dolly Bent's party, and you didn't want to come and match some more thread and silk for her to finish it with.'

Nannie looked more surprised and also very downcast.

'I know about the dress, because she bought the stuff for it here last week, and she was making it for a surprise to you. Now just bring a bit of sunshine into your face, and take your silk, and trot home to your mother, and tell her that you are sorry, and you won't do so any more. But the next time she asks you to do an errand say, 'Here am I,' and go with a willing mind.'

And Nannie did just as he told her to, and burst into the sewing room like a small cyclone, and flinging silk and thread and herself upon her mother, she said she was sorry and that she didn't know about the dress, all in one breath.

And mamma only smiled, as mothers will, and said, 'Never mind this time dearie, only you will find as you grow older that serving with a willing mind is the only service which is really worth anything.—'Child's Hour.'

Sample Copies.

Any subscriber who would like to have specimen copies of the 'Northern Messenger' sent to friends can send the names with addresses and we will be pleased to supply them, free of cost. Sample copies of the 'Witness' and 'World Wide' will also be sent free on application.

The Story of Jack and Polly

Between monkeys and parrots there is popularly supposed to exist an inherent hostility; so much so that a 'monkey and parrot time' has passed into a familiar saying.

A rather interesting episode recently

occurred in San Francisco that is not unworthy of note. The incident proved that there are exceptions to the generally accepted theory that the monkey and parrot are eternal foes.

An extensive bird fancier, whose

place business is on McAllister Street, recently received a large and very brilliantly plumaged parrot from New Zealand. For some time the dealer had possessed a very lively and mischievous little monkey. Jack was always playing pranks. He was kept in a large wooden cage, which was partitioned off in the middle, with a door between. Having no suitable cage for Polly, the dealer placed the bird in one part of the big cage, and took the precaution to close the partition door. Polly had been taught to talk, and was very garrulous. She kept up a constant fire at the monkey—such as 'Hello there,' 'Good-by,' 'Polly, Polly, poor Polly,' 'Wake up,' etc. Jack kept up a constant chatter for a few days by way of retort. Still there seemed to be no particular hostility between the two, and they soon appeared on rather amiable terms.

One night Polly began to peck at the partition door, and soon had it wide open. Then she hopped into Jack's apartment. They must have made friends at once. When the dealer opened up his store next morning, judge of his astonishment to find Jack and Polly perched side by side on the monkey's 'trapeze,' just as loving as two kittens! Jack had his head on the bird's breast, while Polly had both wings over the monkey, covering and embracing him. It was a most amusing scene.

After that there was no use of keeping the partition door closed. Polly and Jack became very fast friends. They were inseparable companions, always roosting together. They never came to blows, though Polly would scold her friend roundly now and then. Jack would only grin and chatter back; but it was noticed that Polly would always have the 'last word,' and the monkey would subside. With the exceptions of these wordy contentions, Jack and Polly are dwelling together in perfect harmony.—J. M. B.

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Temperance

The Rumseller's Diamond

(Russell Thrapp, in the 'Illinois Issue.')

A rumseller, rich from the spoils of his trade,
Was reading one day that a chemist had made
A diamond so perfect it couldn't be told
From the prettiest sparkler that was ever sold.
This rumseller, just like the rest of his kind,
Had a weakness for gems; so it entered his mind
To order one made, and the very same day
He wrote out his order in somewhat this way:
'Dear Chemist: Please make me the sort of a stone
That a prosperous wine merchant gladly would own.
I want it to weigh about so many grains,
And I'd like a brief statement of what it contains.'

The chemist replied: 'Not a gem have I wrought,
But to bartenders' diamonds I've given some thought.
Of the things they contain you have asked for a list;
Well, I can't name them all, but these few will assist;

'Some cheap ones are made from a man's broken vows,
Who has chanced to recover from one night's carouse.
There are others more costly; they're made of the lives
Of the thousands that perish where one man survives.

'There are some of pure white, like the finest of pearls;
These are made from the souls of the boys and the girls
Whose paths were at first with bright promises strewn,
Till their feet led them into the open saloon.

'The clear, crystal ones are of womanhood's tears,
Condensed from the pitiful anguish of years,
And the rarest that ever I've seen in my life,
Were of tears of a daughter, a mother, a wife.

'But the list must end here, for it sickens the heart
To tell of the depths of this devilish art
That thrives on the souls it has power to convert
Into studs for the front of a rumseller's shirt.'

A Fine Bit of Word Painting

The following will make a good declamation for a boy who has a little dramatic power, and it contains also a good deal of material that can be utilized as a recitation and language lesson. The authorship is not certainly known but it has been ascribed to Judge Arrington, of Texas:

A Famous Brewery.

Where is the liquor which God the Eternal brews for all his children?

Not in the simmering still over the smoky fires choked by poisonous gases and surrounded by the stench of sickening odors and rank corruption doth our Father in heaven prepare the precious essence of life, pure cold water.

But in the green glade and grassy dell where the red deer wanders and the child loves to play; and low down in valleys where the fountains murmur and the rills sing; and away up in the tall mountain tops where the naked granite glitters like gold in the sun, where the storm cloud broods and the thunder clash; and far out on the wide, wild sea where the hurricane howls music and the big waves roar,—there he brews it, this life giving water. Yet everywhere it is a thing of beauty, sparkling in the dewdrop, singing in the summer rain, shining in the ice gem till the leaves are turned to living jewels, spreading a gold veil over the setting sun, or a white gauze about the wintry moon, sparkling in the cataract, sleeping in the glacier, dancing in the hail shower, spreading its snow curtain softly about the wintry world, and weaving that many colored iris the seraph zone of the skies whose warp is the rain drop of earth, whose woof is the sunbeam of heaven checkered over with celestial flowers by the mystic hand of refraction.

Still always it is beautiful this life giving water. No poison bubbles on its brink, its foam brings not madness and murder, no blood stains its liquid glass, no pale widows and starving orphans drop burning tears into its depths.

No ghost from the grave rises up to curse it in words of eternal despair. Speak on my friends, would you exchange it for the demon's drink, alcohol?—Selected.

The Drink Waste

Sir George White, M.P., in a strong article upon the enormous drink waste that takes place in Great Britain, says:

'I believe that the temperance cause is a fundamental one, and is at the root of social and political reform in this country. Mr. Gladstone's terrible words, that the evils of the drink were greater than those of war, pestilence, and famine combined, I believe to be literally true. Nothing has such a serious influence on the trade of the country, and I believe that the resuscitation of activity of all kinds of useful manufactures and the securing of a fair wage for the great mass of our artisans would be accomplished more easily and effectually by a reduction in our expenditure for drink than by any other means.

Drink costs more than our total taxation, and more than the total rent of all the houses, shops, and hotels in the country. It restrains our demand for commodities, because of its small wages fund, more than if we were deprived of our whole colonial trade and our colonies ceased to purchase in our markets, for it lessens the purchasing power of the nation by £70,000,000 and gives nothing in return. But the monetary side of the question is its least evil side. It divorces more marriages than all other causes put together; it keeps more people from the house of God than any other evil. It is the greatest black spot on our civilization, and not only hinders the progress of every good thing, but aggravates the effects of every evil thing.'

A Striking Offer

The 'National Advocate,' U.S.A., states that eleven grocery firms throughout Delaware Co., Ohio, have made the following offer to those who are in the habit of drinking three glasses of whiskey a day throughout the year, costing 10 cents a glass. They will supply, for the amount thus spent annually, the undermentioned goods, and will also give a premium of $15.30 to the whiskey-drinker for making the change in his expenditure:—

3 Barrels Flour.
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People Who Scatter Sunshine

Dorothy Dix says: 'The comfortable and comforting people are those who look upon the bright side of life gathering its roses and sunshine, and making the most that happens seem the best.'

Oh, that there were more such people, but, alas, too many are prone to look upon the dark side of life and instead of being thankful for their blessings, they magnify their trials and tribulations until one might think them the most miserable and unhappy of creatures. How true it is that 'mountains out of mole hills grow,' and the more one dwells upon his misfortunes the larger they

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grow. It is an acknowledged fact that some people really enjoy being miserable.

It is by no means the men and women who have a smooth, serene life, who go about with a smiling countenance carrying sunshine everywhere. Oh, no, many of them have had a lifetime of sorrow, but they have learned their lesson well and are resolved to get all they can out of life, both for themselves and their neighbors.

One sweet-faced young woman carries such an atmosphere of peace and comfort about with her that she radiates sunshine wherever she goes. She has a bright, winsome face, a pleasant smile and a cheery word for everyone, no matter how dark the day. Is it any wonder that she is welcomed alike by old and young?

Does she never have any trials or tribulations of her own? some one asks. Yes, indeed, enough to make a stouter heart than hers shrink, but she has learned that by lightening other people's loads and scattering sunshine through life's path, she will make her own life happier and more sunshiny. She must have chosen for her life motto the following beautiful words:

'I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing therefore that I can do, or any kindness I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.'

Another young woman who stands alone in the world and has gone through enough of sorrow and trouble to sadden, if not sour, a large number of women, is always as bright and cheery as a sunbeam.

Aunt Nell is a welcome visitor in many homes and always finds a ready welcome from the oldest to the youngest. She agrees with Ella Wheeler Wilcox:

'Laugh, and the world laughs with you;
Weep, and you weep alone.'

Still another sunshiny woman, who is nearing her half century milestone, and who is beloved by all who know her, has had a life of sorrow, disappointment and hardships, but through it all she has been brave and strong and ever ready to stretch out a helping hand to suffering humanity. Never has there been a day no matter how busy she was, when she has not found time to do something for some poor sick creature, to make some lonely, forlorn man or woman happier by some trifling gift, or delight a small boy or girl with a story.

A dear old lady, who is a shut-in much of the time, puts in her time in knitting warm mittens and stockings for poor children, and is just as cheery and bright as she can be, although necessity compels her to be alone much of the time.

The best heritage that can be given any child is a sweet, sunny disposition, which shall enable him to go through life scattering sunshine and kind words wherever he may go. Riches may take their flight, while a bright sunshiny nature will be likely to stay with him forever.—New York 'Observer.'

Read Good Books

The value of good books in a home is inestimable. They are storehouses of treasure to both parents and children. They interest and instruct both the young, the middle aged and the old.

Wise parents make a specialty of providing their homes with choice books—books for children, books for youth, books for themselves. In making their selections they are careful to avoid the trashy and sensational in fiction, and at the same time eagerly choose such as are true to nature and instructive and ennobling in sentiment—books that are historically interesting and reliable, books which in style are pure and ennobling, and which, from a literary standpoint, are approved by the best authors and critics.

Homes which are supplied with small libraries of this kind are a haven of opportunity, culture, safety and refinement to the children who grow up therein.

Children who are well supplied with dictionaries, encyclopedias, histories, works of reference and other useful books, will educate themselves unconsciously, and almost without expense, and will learn many things of their own accord in moments which would otherwise be wasted; and which, if learned in schools, academies or colleges, would cost ten times as much as the expense of the books would be. Besides, homes are brightened and made attractive by good books, and children stay in such pleasant homes; while those whose education has been neglected are anxious to get away from home; and they drift off and fall into all manner of snares and dangers.

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ANY person who is the sole head of a family, or any male over 18 years old, may homestead a quarter-section of available Dominion land in Manitoba, Saskatchewan or Alberta. The applicant must appear in person at the Dominion Lands Agency or Sub-Agency for the district. Entry by proxy may be made at any agency, on certain conditions, by father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister of intending homesteader.

Duties. — Six months' residence upon and cultivation of the land in each of three years. A homesteader may live within nine miles of his homestead on a farm of at least 80 acres solely owned and occupied by him or by his father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister.

In certain districts a homesteader in good standing may pre-empt a quarter section alongside his homestead. Price $3.00 per acre. Duties—Must reside six months in each of six years from date of homestead entry (including the time required to earn homestead patent), and cultivate fifty acres extra.

A homesteader who has exhausted his homestead right and cannot obtain a pre-emption may take a purchased homestead in certain districts. Price, $3.00 per acre. Duties—Must reside six months in each of three years, cultivate fifty acres and erect a house worth $300.00.

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